THE EVENING FIRE-SIDE;

OR

Weekly Intelligence

IN THE CIVIL, NATURAL, MORAL, LITERARY AND RELIGIOUS WORLDS.

CALCULATED PARTICULARLY FOR THE PERUSAL OF THE YOUNG, AND THOSE OF RETIRED HABITS OF LIFE.

PUBLISHED INDEPENDENTLY OF ANY INTERESTED PARTY ATTACHMENT, AND WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE PRINCIPLES OF TRUTH AND PURITY.

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FOR THE EVENING FIRE-SIDE.

Messieurs Editors,

Being a somewhat conscientious tradesman, and often put to shifts and inconvenience to act with entire satisfaction to myself and customers, I have had a deal of concern on my mind to find out some method by which I may serve both them and myself to good purpose: for I don't like to tell fibs *unless I can gain some advantage by it.*

The matter is this—I am apt to promise to do work within a fixed period, and seldom keep my word.—Thus a man bespeaks a pair of boots, and says they must be done by that day week; willing to oblige him and secure the job, I assure him, upon the honour of a gentleman, that they shall be ready on the *very day*, knowing, notwithstanding, that I have already engaged more work than I can do in six months.—Well, my customer calls, exactly at the time, and was I equally punctual, all would be well—but every body knows that the memory of the man who promises is not so *exact* and *strong* as his to whom the promise is made, and so it happens that I have forgotten the boots—and sure it can be no crime to have a bad memory—and if a man can't remember, how can he? I make my apology accordingly, and *promise* anew—but as my evil genius will have it, time goes on, and the appointed day comes round again, and still the boots are unfinished—disappointment succeeds to disappointment, until at length my customer grows outrageous, and perhaps abusive.—Now what is to be done? I am desirous of obliging every body, and yet satisfy but few.—Dick Trim lately affronted me very much.—He came to my shop, with a strip of paper in his hand, on which he had noted down the number of times I had deceived him, as he said, and even preserved a record of the very words I had used from time to time—and really alarmed me as he read aloud, before my apprentice boys, the catalogue which he had preserved of my transgressions; and after that, he pulled a bible out of his pocket, and backed what he had already done with as many scripture quotations, against liars, as made my very hair stand on end; and in my confusion, being just at that time pounding a bit of soal leather, I hit my thumb and bruised it so vioently, that I have not been able to do any work since—and so, having leisure, take the liberty of making matters known to you.

This affair sorely grieved me, a while, but howandeavour I took comfort on remembering that as to the *hard sayings* in the Bible, they were uttered expressly against the Jews—a stiff-necked, perverse generation—more than *six thousand years* ago; and even that such of them as are in the testament are *very old*, and almost *worn out*. But, as Dick affronted me so much, and I did not wish him to make any more such unmannerly visits, I got rid of him by making my boys finish his boots and take them home; and I am resolved, let what will happen, he shall never enter my shop again—for I'll let him know I have as rich relations, and am as good a man, and come of as good a family, and support as good a reputation as he, and aint ashamed to speak my mind to him, nor to meet him any day—only let him keep his scrips of paper and his bible to himself—and not come a troubling his neighbours, who don't want any of his reading.

But I do profess, what with one, and what with another, they almost put me beside myself as folks say. A cute old gentleman in our street, knowing how my customers vex me with their unreasonableness in expecting me to keep my word, whether it suits me or not, has recommended me to get a thing made, which will be a sort of wheel of fortune, a sort of not, and which shall go slowly round, by internal clock work.—To this wheel I am to have as many prizes as I have customers, and as many blanks as I choose; and when a prize is drawn against any one's name, the fortunate adventurer shall have his work done immediately.—The advantage, he says, will be here,—that all standing an equal chance, there will be less grumbling among the disappointed, and each will be fortunate *some* day—and I will save my poor brains numberless tormenting quandaries, and my tender conscience some twitches and qualms.—At first, I thought his proposal a piece of queer impudence, or waggery—but having considered the matter, I am inclined to think well of it, believing it may prove a *convenience;* and would also recommend it to the notice of my brother mechanics, and to merchants and others, who have occasion to make and to break a deal of promises, when dunned either for work or for money; for, sure enough, it will prove a saving of time, and keep a man from telling so many fibs; for when any one calls for an answer, let him look to the *wheel*, and not bother the master of the shop, who will, of course, take care to make the machine move slowly, and have a plenty of blanks.

It was but last week that a merchant's apprentice, a pert, forward chap, who left his boots to be repaired, only a few months before, brought his marking pot and brush, to my house, and receiving the usual answer, without further ado made a long black stroke quite across my shop wall, and said that every time he came there after, and I told him a lie, he would do the same.—As I hate such doings, I plainly told him it was foolishness, and would answer no purpose—for, says I, you'll soon black the wall all over, and what will you do then?—"Do! said the saucy youth—why then I'll begin to mark

with white, and after that with black again, until you get my boots done."

Now I have no relish for such nonsense, and shall abominate his nasty markings, and would almost as soon have another visit from Dick Trim, with his slip of paper and bible; for they will be like a standing reproach to me, every time I look up, and also tempt some of my other customers to be equally mischievous, and if any one should take it in his head to cut a notch on some part of my shop, every time I disappointed him, I should soon see an end of shop and all, and be literally cut out—and yet I don't know but I am threatened with a worse evil or plague than them all; for Joe Twist said, but last night, "Simon, says he, I have called so often for the shoes I left here to be mended, some months ago, that I am resolved I never will call but *once* more."

"Fellow, says I, why I don't care if you never call again (for I had his shoes and could lose nothing as I thought)—but he answered me, very coolly, that call *once* more he would, and bring his taylors work with him, and not stir from my house, but *eat*, *drink*, and *sleep* with me, till his shoes were mended!—Should others hear of Joe's threat, and be like-minded, I shall soon be eaten out of house and home, and business too, and therefore am determined to do something right off hand to get rid of these pesterments: so I've been a thinking, Messieurs Editors, that, if so be you'll get a wheel made for me, and send it to my shop this side of Arch-street, I'll put it up and try it, and then enter into a *promise* to make you a pair of boots.

Yours to serve,

SIMON SLOW.

N. B. An apprentice wanted—none need apply but of *good character, and sharp—fit to look after the wheel.*

FOR THE EVENING FIRE-SIDE.

The following lines are offered, not for the merits of the poetry, but the sentiment. Perhaps, if some other persons, addicted to mental dejection and complaint, like the unworthy writer, should examine *properly* their origin, a similar conclusion would follow.

SOLILOQUY.

Why hang the lingering hours of cheerless day,
  Which not one gleam of consolation knows?
Why comes not Peace, with her enliv'ning ray,
  To glad the heart with its long-lost repose?

Why is the mind, so wont in seasons past
  To hail *Content* and all her happy train,
Now on the dark and dangerous ocean cast,
  Where storms o'erwhelm, and even Hope is vain?

Why, when each fibre of the doting heart
  Is bent alone on following duty's call,
Must it be subject to affliction's smart,
  And all its cheering prospects prostrate fall?

But whence these plaints, mere ravings of the soul?
  Has Heaven forborn to beam around its grace?
Let *stillness* once this restless breast control;
  Then ask the heart, whence all these ills have place?

Ah! bid the streams of self-abasement flow;
  For *now* no art can thy *conviction* hide!
That ill is thine which causes half our wo,
  'Tis UNSUBJECTED SELF, 'tis STUBBORN PRIDE!

Life's deadliest bane! each nerve of sense within
  Proclaims this canker to celestial fruit;
And the frail plant, long nourished in sin,
  Ah! feels its influence direful at the root!

Then cease, distrust: nor more presume to own
  Such foul suspicions tenants of thy breast;
Nor dare arraign the deeds of mercy's throne,
  The source, and only source of all our rest!

A.

FOR THE EVENING FIRE-SIDE.

AMICUS RESPONDET.

In your last number I perceive that "a member of the Invisible Club" (whom I advise for his own sake to remain invisible) has been abusing poor old Dr. Franklin, with as much acrimony as if the Doctor had been "poaching" some of said "member's" most finished productions.—How *invisible* are the operations of Envy and Jealousy! they creep into the heart, make a man out of humour with every one that outstrips him, and, uneasy at the growing reputation of every rival, he strives to pull down the rising structure of his Fame, and of the ruins to build a wall round his own little transient popularity.—Such a man deserves our pity. His heart is occupied with restless and troublesome tenants; but there are some other traits in such a character, which, as I am not a good painter myself, I shall borrow the talents of Franklin himself to sketch for me.—You will find them among his "Letters and Papers on Philosophical subjects"—Letter 24th to Dr. L—— of Charlestown, dated Philadelphia, March 18, 1755—I particularly recommend this letter to the "member of the Invisible Club." He will there see that the Doctor has "*invented*" a "wonderful" description of the *envious* man, and perhaps (if he have honesty) he will be candid enough to restore to the Doctor, in your next number, the "plume" of just praise which he has vainly endeavored to "steal" from him.

"There are every where a number of people," says the Doctor, "who being totally destitute of any inventive faculty themselves, do not readily conceive that others may possess it; they think of inventions as of miracles; there *might* have been such formerly, but they are *now* ceased. With these every one who offers a new invention is deemed a pretender: He had it from some other country or some book: A man of *their own acquaintance*—one who has no more sense than themselves, could not possibly, in their opinion, be the inventor of any thing. Jealousy and Envy deny the merit or the novelty of your invention, but Vanity, when the novelty or merit is established, claims it for its own——— Thus the origin of many of the most extraordinary inventions, though produced within but a few centuries, is involved in doubt and uncertainty.—We scarce know to whom we are indebted for the Compass and for Spectacles: nor have even paper and printing, which record every thing else, been able to preserve with certainty the name and reputation of their inventors.—One would not, therefore, of all faculties or qualities of the mind, wish for a friend or a child that he should have Invention; for his attempts to benefit mankind in that way, however well imagined, if they do not succeed, expose him (though very unjustly) to general ridicule and contempt; and if they do succeed, to Envy, Robbery, and *abuse*."

When I sent you the celebrated parable against Persecution, I had never heard it doubted that Franklin was the inventor. I had copied it from an old paper, together with a letter published at the same time, which attributed it to Franklin—but on inquiry since I am credibly informed that he always and uniformly denied being the author of it, and therefore he is in this instance at least honourably acquitted of plagiarism—but how can this member of the invisible club, with his mouth full of the *professions* of candour, come forward and propagate a falsehood; he has republished the declaration of a Virginian, who says "there is nothing in that parable, sir, natural; every word of it was *revealed*. It *all* came to Franklin from Bishop Taylor."—Now, readers, please to turn to the parable as published by the "invisible" man, and compare it with that which was taken from the pen of Franklin, and see the effects of the Doctor's "*wonderful talents*."—I hardly know which deserves most applause, the original inventor, or the man who dress'd it in such beautiful language, adapted it to the style of the scriptures with such nicety, and made such an important addition, as to give it an air of probability

beyond any other circumstance. The superlative beauties of the Doctor's parable in every particular, will be better seen by a comparison of the two, than by my description of them.

"What think ye therefore, readers" of the triumphing, inveterate enemy of an ornament to his country?—what think ye of the man who, under the cloak of invisibility, comes forward to lay the "branching honours" of a Franklin in the dust?—of a man, who, envious of the fame of a deceased writer, steps forward in disguise and attacks the defenceless favourite of his fellow citizens; who is now no more, but whose character, as a man of Genius and an *Inventor*, will survive the wreck of ages, and brighten with the lapse of time.

AMICUS.

[In presenting to our readers the sweet strains of the DRUID, we have not presumed to alter his antiquated dress, lest by modernizing even the spelling, we might unwarily take away some of the beauties.]

TO THE BARDS OF THE FIRE-SIDE.

1.
Tho' benumb'd with age I languish,
Lost to life's energic fire,
Health-deserted, prey to anguish;
Yet for *you* I'll tune the lyre.

2.
Fame nor Favour am I courting,
In my cot no muse is found—
Nor does Fancye, idly sporting,
Weave her shadowy forms around.

3.
Griefe inspires me, while reflecting
On your songs, so vainly sweet;
Where I've fondly been expecting
Reason would with Virtue meet.

4.
Satire is a useful weapon,
If it Truth alone defende,
Wit, a treasure, if it keepe in
Wisdome's bounds, and none offend.

5.
But if Envye, Rage, or Rancoure
Once infect the writer's heart;
Satire there, a deadlye canker,
Soon eats out the better parte.

6.
Spurious wit, by pride directed,
Faintlye flashes in our eyes—
Soone by Wisdome's ken detected,
Like the meteor sinks and dies.

7.
Onlye Virtue's lasting splendour,
Or Religion's holy flame,
Can the sweetest Poet render
Worthy the rewarde of Fame.

8.
Then, to nobler views aspiring,
On sublimer wing ascende—
From each quibb'ling theme retiring,
Genius shou'd be Virtue's friende.

9.
Thus wou'd thousands fondlye listen,
Whilst you strucke the sounding lyre,
And the teare of rapture glisten,
Melted by the Poet's fire.

Wood-Glen, Feb. 8. DRUID.

SELECTED FOR THE EVENING FIRE-SIDE.

EXTERNAL IMPROVEMENT.

Piety maintains no natural war with elegance, and Christianity would be no gainer by making her disciples unamiable. Religion does not forbid that the exterior be made to a certain degree the object of attention. But the admiration bestowed, the sums expended, and the time lavished on arts which add little to the intrinsic value of life, should have limitations. While these arts should be admired, let them not be admired above their just value: while they are practised, let it not be to the exclusion of higher employments: while they are cultivated, let it be to amuse leisure, but not to engross life.

But it happens unfortunately, that to ordinary observers, the girl who is really receiving the worst education often makes the best figure. The outward accomplishments have the dangerous advantage of addressing themselves more immediately to the senses, and of course meet every where with those who can in some measure appreciate as well as admire them; for all can see and hear, but all cannot scrutinize and discriminate. External acquirements too recommend themselves the more because they are more rapidly as well as more visibly progressive. While the mind is led on to improvement by slow motions and imperceptible degrees; while the heart must now be admonished by reproof, and now allured by kindness; its liveliest advances being suddenly impeded by obstinacy, and its brightest prospects often obscured by passion; it is slow in its acquisitions of virtue, and reluctant in its approaches to piety. The unruly and turbulent propensities of the mind are not so obedient to the forming hand as defects of manner or awkwardness of gait. Often when we fancy that a troublesome passion is completely crushed, we have the mortification to find that we have "scotch'd the snake, not killed it." One evil temper starts up before another is conquered. The subduing hand cannot cut off the ever-sprouting heads so fast as the prolific Hydra can re-produce them, nor fell the stubborn Antœus so often as he can recruit his strength, and rise in vigorous and repeated opposition.

Hired teachers are also under a disadvantage resembling tenants at rack-rent; it is their interest to bring in an immediate revenue of praise and profit, and for the sake of a present rich crop, those who are not strictly conscientious, do not care how much the ground is impoverished for future produce. But parents, who are the lords of the soil, must look to permanent value, and to continued fruitfulness. The best effects of a careful education are often very remote; they are to be discovered in future scenes, and exhibited in as yet untried connections. Every event of life will be putting the heart into fresh situations, and making new demands on its prudence, its firmness, its integrity, or its forbearance. Those whose business it is to form and model it, cannot foresee those contingent situations specifically and distinctly; yet, as far as human wisdom will allow, they must enable it to prepare for them all by general principles, correct habits, and an unremitted sense of dependence on the Great Disposer of events. The young Christian militant must learn and practise all his evolutions; though he does not know on what service his Leader may command him, by what particular foe he shall be most assailed, nor what mode of attack the enemy may employ.

But the contrary of all this is the case with external acquisitions. The master, it is his interest, will industriously instruct his young pupil to set all her improvements in the most immediate and conspicuous point of view. To attract admiration is the great principle sedulously inculcated into her young heart; and is considered as the fundamental maxim; and, perhaps, if we were required to condense the reigning system of the brilliant education of a lady into an aphorism, it might be comprised in this short sentence, *To allure and to shine*. This system however is the fruitful germ, from which a thousand yet unborn vanities, with all their multiplied ramifications will spring. A tender mother cannot but feel an honest triumph in completing those talents in her daughter which will necessarily excite admiration; but she will also shudder at the vanity that admiration may excite, and at the new ideas it will awaken; and, startling as it may sound, the labours of a wise mother anxious for her daughter's best interests, will seem to be at variance with those of all her teachers. She will indeed rejoice at her progress, but she will rejoice with trembling; for she is fully aware that if all possible accomplishments could be bought at the price of a single virtue, of a single principle, the purchase would be infinitely dear,

and she would reject the dazzling but destructive acquisition. She knows that the superstructure of the accomplishments can be alone safely erected on the broad and solid basis of Christian humility: nay more, that as the materials of which that superstructure is to be composed, are in themselves of so unstable and tottering a nature, the foundation must be deepened and enlarged with more abundant care, otherwise the fabric will be overloaded with its own ornaments, and what was intended only to embellish the building, will prove the occasion of its fall.

[*H. More's Strictures.*]

FOR THE EVENING FIRE-SIDE.

To the Editors.

I'm twenty-eight years old and more,
And can't obtain a wife, I fear,
To comfort my existence here.
For lo! my day is nearly o'er:
At thirty 'tis by all agreed,
A man's a Batchelor indeed.

Among the fair ones, that I know,
I'm sure there must be one or two
Nice, faultless creatures, that would do,
If they the blessing would bestow:
But how to bring the thing about,
I fear is past my finding out.

It is not manly to dissemble—
To boldly ask, and be deny'd,
Is what I've very often try'd—
The recollection makes me tremble:
For when they frown'd, and answer'd, No!
The vital stream, most ceas'd to flow.

The time is short—th' occasion pressing—
Don't disappoint my expectation;
Make known my present situation,
And bring about the wish'd for blessing:
Then, if she's handsome, rich and clever,
My warmest thanks are your's forever.

TOM TIMID.

Selected for the Evening Fire-side.

FROM "ESSAYS, MORAL, RELIGIOUS, &c."

No. XV. April 30, 1803.

On the transitory nature of human enjoyments.

"The glories of our birth and state,
Are shadows, not substantial things:
There is no armour against fate,
Death lays his icy hands on kings."

SHIRLEY.

The subject, "*courteous reader*," which claims thy attention at present, though it has often exercised the talents of many, in endeavouring to excite mankind to reflection, is nevertheless in its nature, supremely important: even the volatile and the gay acknowledge in their serious intervals, that the close of life presents a lesson, deeply instructive. The various pleasures of the world afford so many delusive temptations, that man generally finds charms sufficient in them to captivate him, and raise an ardent wish in his bosom, that his residence here might be perpetual. But a truth incontestable forces itself before him: the soul can never be satisfied with any thing less than that peace which is received from above; and which is so essentially different from sensual delight. The magnitude of the concern, therefore, which must one day engage the notice of every individual, is not lessened by repetition, and carries with itself a sufficient apology for "stirring up the pure mind by way of remembrance."*

Man, in journeying the path, which millions have already passed, will find that he is the disposer of his own happiness:—on himself alone, rests the acceptance or rejection. He too often, however, perversely causes *imaginary* woes to raise into a tumult all the faculties of his soul—to rend, with suffocating throbs, his agitated frame. Few rise superior to the influence produced by these shadows of evil; those few can discern with the "eye of Faith," the finger of a benevolent Providence visibly directing their temporal concerns, and pointing to their future welfare. But alas! how numerous are those infatuated beings, who suffer the lustre of the lamp of Religion to be obscured by the dark fogs and mists of this world! The virtuous man rejoices in its penetrating, cheerful beam; but the indolent and the volatile extinguish it,—forever!

There are innumerable objects around us, which by their analogy with the life of man, furnish moral lectures for his attentive perusal. The gliding river, slowly passing in successive gentle waves, to empty itself into the great bosom of the ocean, whose waters are again exhaled by the grand source of light and heat, presents a striking emblem of human life;—forcibly impressive to a *common* observer; and the philosopher, who pursues his researches into the recesses of nature perceives, that VITALITY merely *borrows* certain principles from the atmosphere, the earth, and the water, which it must finally refund in the great payment of her "last debt." The moralist, when he sees the fleeting objects of life receding hourly from the anxious, lingering view of his fellow-creatures, will feel his bosom expanded by philanthropy, and his eye moistened with the tear of affection. Lo! even now view him "by lonely Contemplation led," † pursuing his difficult path through the rank weeds and grass which have overgrown the court-yard of yonder ruinous building: mark him now sitting on that mouldering pillar which once supported the massy gate, often opened to the stranger, and the calls of hospitality! Absorbed in melancholy reflections, he ruminates on the solemn romantic scene.—Listen to *his* lecture; it is as useful as some of those delivered by *modern* philosophers.

"Behold! vain mortal, the remains of some of the greatest efforts of the art, ingenuity, and perseverance of former ages!—The once stately edifices, which splendidly reared their heads in the exulting triumph of human genius!—view now their crumbling ruins! they present, to the reflecting mind, a solemn monument of the effects of the slow, but sure tooth of Time. Grand and affecting scenes! When imagination's power causes a vivid picture of the greatness they once exhibited, to arise in the mental eye, sensibility's tear must flow, while marking the contrast—while contemplating the uncertainty of the boasted grandeur of mortality! THUS pass away our fondest hopes; and thus end the lucid visions of fancy.—Such is the folly of indulging in expectations, which have no foundation surer than these. Each day conveys a striking lesson of the instability of all worldly greatness, the frailty of all human enjoyments, and sublunary pursuits. Virtue alone stands firm,

"And if you pant for *glory*, build your fame
"On *this* foundation, which the secret shock
"Defies, of Envy, and all-sapping Time." ‡

"Encouraged by this assurance, we can behold with a pleasing solemnity, yonder rising hillocks where the long grass waves to the gentle zephyr, which protect the sacred ashes once inhabited by spirits now departed a *short* time before us: only remaining vestiges! which declare the cemetery of the families of this house, ennobled, perhaps, by the vanity of man, with the most splendid titles, long since sunk into the wide-mouthed gulph of oblivion!

In thee, O Grave! inevitable lot of all mankind!—in thee, heroes and princes sleep equally undistinguished from him, who has been exposed to the oppressions of penury and distress: thou art the last remnant of the honours of the line, who flourished in times long past within those

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* 2 Pet. iii. 1.

† "If chance, *by lonely Contemplation led.*"
Gray's Elegy.

‡ Armstrong.

walls which the ivy now encircles, and the moping owl inhabits—which have oft re-echoed the noise of the sprightly dance, and the festive mirth and jollity of the "seekers of pleasure" within: ah! Piety might once have dwelt there, and extended compassion to the solitary traveller, and the humble pilgrim, who sought rest on their weary way; there might Benevolence have afforded a kindly shelter to the oppressed! Even yon scattered fragments of a tomb, may have covered the remains of one, who has often rejoiced in the happiness of his fellow-creatures: the virtues which formerly animated those features with complacency and delight, that are now mouldering in the silent dust—are transplanted into heaven, and will there flourish in splendid luxuriance. But the verdant turf shall not enclose, with the frail remains of mortality which repose beneath it, *every* trace of the soul which once inhabited them. No! the dark night of the tomb shall not envelop in oblivion, the fire of genius, the sacred flame of piety, the benefit of a noble example.—The radiance of eternal day now encircles the kindred spirit released from the bonds which united it to earth: it is now made capable of *enjoying* the fullness of His glory, who will ever protect the virtuous from unmerited oppression, raise a paternal friend to the orphan, and afford a sovereign balm to the sighings of the afflicted."

O.

FOR THE EVENING FIRE-SIDE.

A DREAM.

While seated last night by the side of my fire,
I felt somewhat drowsy and thought to retire;
But was lull'd into sleep by the warmth of its beam,
And had in my chair a very odd dream.

I thought I was one of the guests, at a feast
Where a great many dishes were serv'd up in taste:
Beef, Venison, Mutton, and all kinds of meat
Most pleasant to taste of, or wholesome to eat;
Plumb puddings, and Pastry, and *Flummery* too,
Made up the variety plac'd in our view.
Where socially seated we feasted together,
And talk'd on *stale* topicks, on science and weather—
Said the season was cold—which no one deny'd;
And heartily wish'd for a good *Fire-side*.
And as we felt chilly, it needs must be told,
Tho' our dishes were dainty they seem'd rather cold.
Some fresh ones there were, well season'd 'tis true,
But I shall not deny that these were too few.
A TAPER we had (tho' too faint to enable
The guests to see clearly all over the table;)
The servants were call'd more light to afford,
Which quickly was brought and plac'd on our board.
It gave us indeed great pleasure to find,
We were not altogether to darkness consign'd.
But, alas!—we've been told it again and again,
That the prospect of pleasure's the prelude of pain:
To elucidate this you need but pursue
The rest of my dream, and you'll see that 'tis true:

The rogues in the kitchen, from some vile intention
Which I saw in my dream, tho' now shall not mention,
Had put in our Lamps and Candle-stick sockets
Spit-devils and squibs, and one or two ROCKETS;
Which when they'd burnt down to th' inflammable matter,
They flew round the room, *spit flat* and spatter;
Till at length as by chance in their very odd capers,
They flew in amidst a bundle of papers;
Then quickly ensued such a great conflagration
As put all the guests in extreme perturbation:
When those viands that pleas'd us the moment before,
With the table's contents, were all dash'd on the floor;
And, the fire still raging, it higher arose,
Until the young gentlemen brought in their *hose*;*
When by their exertions and laudable zeal
The fire was quell'd, tho' it burnt a good deal.

Now methought I heard some with in'trest inquire,
The damage sustain'd by this wonderful fire.
Some said that a vast deal of mischief was done,
And others cry'd out—oh no! there is none:
One rumour was current, on which all rely'd,
That the papers consum'd were the fam'd *Fire-side*.

Now to tell you still further, tho' strange it may seem,
'Twas the noise of last fire† that ended my dream,
Which, when I awoke, I immediately penn'd it,
And now to the Fire-side circle I send it.

DREAMER.

February 10th, 1805.

Frauds of shopkeepers—Stories of cheats.

GREAT as the security of Petersburg is in regard to acts of open violence, yet it is necessary for every one to be upon his guard against artful impostors and deep-laid stratagems. The frequent instances of this kind make every Russian wary, and therefore they are so easily made the dupes of their countrymen; but so much the more do they make up for this at the expense of strangers and foreigners, particularly when they are not acquainted with the language of the country. The shopkeepers and merchants commonly ask three times, and frequently even five times as much as the commodity is worth; the unknowing offer the half, and they think they have made a good bargain, till they find, when too late, that they have been miserably cheated. To give damaged goods a fair appearance, to defraud in measure and weight in an imperceptible manner, to slip bad goods among the better that have been bought and ordered home; all these, and a multitude of other tricks, no dealers in the world understand better than the Russians. As the Russians in general are surprisingly cunning and of quick parts, they are eminently addicted to this species of industry; and the pick-pockets of St. Peterburg and Moscow may safely lay wagers on their dexterity with those of London and Paris.

Some time since the following affair happened at Moscow, which excited great curiosity both there and at the residence; and, on account of its originality, deserves to be noticed while we are on this subject. A wealthy nobleman, well known as a fancier of precious stones, fell accidentally in company with a person unknown to him, who wore on his finger a ring of great beauty and value. After a long discourse on its real worth, the nobleman offered him a considerable price for it; which the stranger at first refused, on the reasonable ground that he had no desire to part with it. At length, however, to evade the repeated importunities of the nobleman, he declared that he could not sell it, because—the stones were not genuine. This declaration filled all the company, among whom were connoisseurs, with amazement. The nobleman, in order to be sure of the matter, desired to have the ring for a few days against sufficient security, received it, and ran from one Jeweller to another, who all unanimously pronounced the stones to be genuine, and of great value. With this assurance, and the hope of a good bargain, he brought back the ring to its owner, who, on receiving it, put it, with great indifference, into his waistcoat pocket. The negociation now began afresh: the stranger persisted in his resolution, till at length the nobleman offered a sum which was pretty near the true value of it. 'This ring,' returned the stranger, 'is a token of friendship; but I am not rich enough to reject so large a sum as you offer for it. Yet this high offer is the very reason of my not complying. How can you, if you are thoroughly conscious of what you are doing, offer so much money for a ring, which the owner himself confesses to be made up of false stones?"—If your determination depends only on that, replied the buyer, 'here, take at once the sum,' (laying it in bank notes upon the table) 'and I call the gentlemen here present to witness, that I voluntarily, and after due consideration, pay it.' The seller took the money, and gave the nobleman the ring, repeating the declaration, that the stones were false, and that it was still time to make the bargain void. The latter obstinately refused to hearken to his advice, hastened joyfully home, and found—what the reader has already guessed—that the stranger had said what was true. Instead of the genuine ring, he had a false one made exactly like the other. The

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* We presume the writer means *House*.
† Near the Draw-bridge.

affair was brought into a court of justice; but as the seller proved, that during the whole business there was no question at all about genuine stones; that the purchaser expressly treated only for a false ring; the judge was accordingly obliged to pronounce in favour of the latter.

The arts of cheating in the articles of provisions are no where better understood than here. Ordinary deceptions of this nature happen in every place; but when one looks at a fowl, which to all appearance is finely fattened, and finds it only filled with wind; or asparagus, deprived of their eatable parts, pointed again and coloured with a tempting verdure; no man will call these ordinary tricks.

A lady, who had not been long come out of Germany, and had heard much from her acquaintance at Petersburg of the many artifices of this nature practised in that city, took the resolution to use the utmost caution in all her dealings, in order to refute the common opinion, that every stranger must buy his wisdom. Several days passed on: one morning, however, a rasnoschtschik* entered her apartment, and offered her a pound of tea, the last remains of what he had to sell; she weighed the parcel, and found it just: she made a trial; the tea was unadulterated, and well flavoured: she shook it all out into a basin; no deceit was discoverable. She inquired the price, and offered a third part of what he asked: the vender was naturally not satisfied with this offer; turned his tea back again into the box, wrapped a cloth about it, and crammed it into his bosom. At length the bargain was struck, and the commodity delivered; however, prudence does no harm; the lady opened the box, and saw the tea she had bought. She shut it up, to the great joy of the seller, who in the mean time asked her, smiling, why she was so extremely cautious, and why she had so very bad an opinion of his honesty. The money was paid; the rasnoschtschik went his way; and some days after the box was found full of sand and grains, excepting the surface, which was really good tea.'

Henry Stork's Picture of Petersburg.

FUNERAL CEREMONIES AT PARIS.

At the funeral of a prince of the blood, all his household, civil and military, marched in the procession. The *corbillard*, or sort of hearse, in which his highness was carried to St. *Denis*, was almost as large as the moveable theatre which Mr. Flockton transports from fair to fair in England. Calculated in appearance for carrying the body of a giant, it was decorated with escutcheons, and drawn by eight horses, also caparisoned to correspond with the hearse. These, however, were but the trappings of wo.

While this funeral car moved slowly forward amidst a concourse of mourners, its threefold hangings concealed from the eye of the observer the journeymen coach and harness-makers, drinking, and playing at dice on the lid of his highness's coffin, by way of dispelling the *ennui* of the journey. These careless fellows were placed there to be at hand to repair any accident that might happen on the road; so, while, on the outside of the hearse, all wore the appearance of sadness; within, all was mirth; no bad image of the reverse of grandeur and the emptiness of human ostentation.

[*Paris as it was.*]

To the Editors of the Evening Fire-side.

Having read with pleasure, though not with *full* approbation, the "Epistle on Courtship" inserted in your Evening Fire-side, I may inform you, that a fear hath arisen in my mind, lest those who are in the honourable pursuit of *a wife*, should be discouraged; I therefore send for publication the following Epistle on Wedlock; which will remind them, that the happiness they will enjoy in the company and conversation of a woman of virtue and merit, will far outweigh all the purgatorial *doubts* and *fears* that may attend them in the *arduous* undertaking.

Your constant reader,
EUDOXUS.

Grave authors say, and witty poets sing,
That honest Wedlock is a glorious thing.

Our Grandsire Adam, ere of Eve possess'd,
Alone, and e'en in Paradise unblest;
With mournful looks the blisful scenes survey'd,
And wander'd in the solitary shade;
The Maker saw, took pity and bestow'd,
Woman, the best, the last reserv'd of God.

A wife! Ah, gentle deities, can he
That has a wife e'er feel adversity?
Would men but follow what the sex advise,
All things would prosper, all the world grow wise:
All other goods by fortune's hand are given,
A wife is the peculiar gift of heaven.
'Twas by Rebecca's aid that Jacob won,
His Father's blessing from an elder son;
Abusive Nabal ow'd his forfeit life
To the wise conduct of a prudent wife;
Heroic Judith, as old Hebrews shew,
Preserv'd the Jews, and slew th' Assyrian foe;
At Esther's suit, the persecuting sword
Was sheath'd, and Israel liv'd to bless the Lord.

On the ancient ruins of an unknown Edifice.

I inquired of time—to whom, said I, was erected this building, which you have levelled with the ground? Time made me no answer, but spread his quick wings and hastened his flight.

I then spoke to Fame—O thou, the parent of all that survives! thou, who—she cast her troubled and sorrow-swelled eyes upon the ground in the attitude of one whose heart is too full to utter words.

Wondering, and confused at what I had seen, I was turning aside from the monument, when I saw Oblivion stepping from stone to stone—Thou, exclaimed I, thou must be acquainted with it! Ah! shew me—He interrupted me with a voice like the groan of deep thunder at a distance—I care not what it has been, it is now mine.

FOR THE EVENING FIRE-SIDE

THE SYLPH.

Shall a mortal eye pursue
Viewless sylphs' aerial flight?—
Trace their footsteps in the dew,
By the full moon's silvery light?—

No—our flight shall still elude
All the toiling arts of man:
On our sports they ne'er intrude,
Nor our wild vagaries scan.

Oft through many a changeful clime
Swiftly flies my airy car,
Oft I sail in state sublime
On the Evening's brilliant Star.

Oft to meet the orient sun
Through the wide expanse I fly;
Oft the eye of man to shun:
To my sacred cave I fly.

Mortal feet shall ne'er profane
ARIEL's secret shadowy cell.
There I lead my fairy train,
There I form the wizard-spell.

Still PHOSPHORUS ply the quill;
But thy *vain* researches spare;
My retreat will mock thy skill,
Till thou canst embody air.

Still thy gleaming falchion wield;
Still each fopling bard dismay;
Till to Satire's power they yield—
Till they own her scepter'd sway.

Well I know thy daring muse
Ask's no *borrow'd* aid to fly:
Well, I know her *native* hues,
Want no brighter, richer dye.

Yet the shafts she throws around,
May a *foreign polish* gain,
And her lyre, a softer sound,
From a *fairer minstrel's* strain.

Think not then the SYLPH design'd
From thy wreath one flower to steal;
Well he knows thy ardent mind—
Well he knows how thou canst *feel*.

* Rasnoschtschiks are venders of small articles about the streets.

But restrain thy "arrowy shower,"
Nor o'erwhelm a *harmless head*;*
Guilt alone should feel thy power—
Guilt alone thy vengeance dread.

Let thy wit's electric flame
Blaze around my viewless form;
Let *me* all thy vengeance claim----
ARIEL *dares* the threat'ning storm.

Why did satire's *erring* Sun †
Scorch yon Poet's silken wings?
Lo! his short career is run----
Like the swan in death he sings.

Bards from DELLA CRUSCAN bowers!
On oblivion's sleepy wave
Strew in heaps your votive flowers----
'Tis a brother's peaceful grave.

ANGUS, now a bard no more,
Give thy talents *nobler* aim;
Nor again attempt to soar
Moth-like, round the Muse's flame.

Fortune's onward path pursue;
Let not aught thy feet beguile:
At her shrine thy vows renew,
Thus shall independence smile.

When her wreath shall deck thy brow,
And content thy steps attend;
Then thy candour must allow,
ARIEL was thy *truest* friend.

Oft, VAROLA, may thy page
Court my unreluctant eye;
Still the worldling's heart engage:
Teach—ah! teach him, how to die.

Regulate the erring heart;
Virtue's *main springs* oft renew;
Wisdom's *oil* with care impart;
Keep the moral *pointers* true.

Lo! with *novel* lustre beaming,
See the CANDLE's glories blaze;
With superior radiance streaming,
While ev'n Sylph's admiring gaze.

Ne'er again shall ARIEL harm thee,
While such splendour marks thy flame;
Never with rude *brush* alarm thee,
Or obstruct thy path to Fame.

Give to ANGUS and PHOSPHORUS
What *they* willingly receive;
Tune to them the plausive chorus;
Flattery's gaudy garland weave.

But forbear with adulation
To insult my list'ning ear;
Merit still my approbation;
Force me not to be *severe*.

ALIQUEM, from public sight
We have seen thy form descend;
"Whate'er is, is surely right:"
Let us then thy choice commend.

ROLAND, has thy skilful hand
Ceas'd so soon to touch the string?
Join again the tuneful band;
All may *preach*, but few can *sing*.

Now the morning's glitt'ring beams
Tremble round my mossy cell;
Mortals wake to golden dreams,
Scribbling bards, again, Farewell.

ARIEL.

* See the communication signed "Phosphorus," in the last number of this paper.

† See the address "to Ariel," in the last number of this paper.

Curious particulars in the soil of Modena, *from a letter communicated by a Member of the Royal Society.*

Dr. *Ramazzini*, in his book of the wonderful exuberance of springs at *Modena*, says, it is the peculiar advantage of this city, that in any place assigned, within, or around it, for the compass of some miles, you may open a clear spring of living water.

For in any situation of ground, when they dig a well, and come to the depth of about 65 feet, they pierce the bottom in the middle with a very large auger, when the auger sinks down five feet, the water bursts out with such violence, and so great a discharge of sand and stones, that the well is almost filled up in a moment, and a perpetual flow of water ensues upon it.

To this account of *Ramazzini* I would add, that these springs do not swell with rain, or decline by drought; and I would remark some circumstances that are very observable in sinking a well, *viz.* From the surface of the ground to the depth of four feet consists of the foundations and ruins of an old city. They meet with the pavement of streets, the shops of handicrafts, the floors of houses, and works in chequer. It is amazing that the ground should be raised to that advanced height, which cannot be imputed to the frequent destruction, and rebuilding of the *city* above its own ruins, for the fields about it are on the same level, or rather higher.

After they have got through this four feet of rubbish, they come to the natural soil, compact and solid, so that you would imagine it to be entire and unbroken; but presently after it blackens and grows fenny, abounding with marshy reeds.

I recollect that I have seen in a well of this nature, about the depth of 24 feet, a barley-straw entire, and in another, at the depth of 26 feet, a bough, with a bunch or cluster of hazlenuts hanging on it, uncorrupted.

Thus alternately, for about six feet, there is observed a variety of change of soil, white or black, with the branches and leaves of several trees, covered with a kind of thin crust or bark, till you come to a level of chalk or marl, which is first visible at the depth of 28 feet.

When this is reached, the workmen are secured from the least disturbance from a new flow of water, and then pursue the work with the greatest facility to the bottom.

The thickness of this stratum of chalk is about 11 feet, and is now and then filled with shells of cockles; it ends at the depth of 39 feet, after that, another layer of marshy ground, at the thickness of 2 feet, appears, heaped up with reeds, and the leaves and branches of plants; when this is removed in the digging, another layer of chalk, partly of the same bulk of the former, offers itself, and ends at the depth of 52 feet; after that another of marshy ground, not unlike the above stratum; then another of chalk, like the superior strata, but of lesser size and thickness; this lies over another of marsh, that ends in the level, where the auger is fixed. This is soft, sandy, mixed with gravel and cockle shells. This disposition of layers, so well distinguished by these strata, is observed in all the wells of the city and suburbs, to keep the same order and regularity.

The trees and plants found are a clear argument they were once exposed to the air. In the lower depth of the wells are found great beams, coals, flints, and pieces of iron. At the first gushing up of the water, it brings up leaves of oak, chesnut, millet, bean-cod, &c.

This is also a proof that the *Adriatick* gulph before the deluge extended to *Modena*, and farther towards *Milan*, and on the decrease of that flood, raised or advanced the soil by the swillage of rivers, &c. from the mountains.

A.

GREEK RELIGION.

ST. PAUL visited Athens, and the other states of Greece, to preach Christianity, and notwithstanding all the anathemas the Pope has denounced against the Greeks, there is, in fact, but little difference between their religion, and that of the Roman Catholics. They equally make use of the sign of the cross; worship images; pray to the saints; have confessors; and believe in transubstantiation, although they do not kneel at the elevation of the host. If they deny the doctrine of purgatory, they admit something very like it, in praying for the souls of the dead. Their bishops and superior clergy are never permitted to marry, but a simple priest is allowed that indulgence once in his life, though he can never take a second wife. They acknowledge the Pope to be the chief of the Patriarchs, but deny his having the power of granting indulgences; and this was his holiness's first reason for accusing them of schism.

It is true, there is another grand point in which they dissent, both from the Roman Catholics and the Protestants; in the article of the Holy Ghost, which they say can proceed from the Father only. There are some less essential differences, such as their using leavened bread in the consecration of the sacrament, and mixing the bread and wine together. And they also differ in the ceremonies of baptism, marriage, and burial. In the first, they give three complete immersions. The second is performed by the priest's changing the ring from the bride's to the bridegroom's finger, saying a few words, and then from the bridegroom's to the bride's. He repeats this ceremony about thirty times, without any alteration, and when he desists, it is again as often performed by each of the godfathers and godmothers. Their funerals are like those of the savages—howling and making hideous cries till the corpse is interred, and then feasting over the grave.

The Patriarch of Constantinople is the head of the Greek Church, and has under him the Patriarchs of Jerusalem, Damascus, and Alexandria. St. Polycarp is their favourite saint. He was one of St. John's disciples, and suffered martyrdom at Smyrna, of which he was the first archbishop.

[*M. Mirror.*]

DOMESTIC INTELLIGENCE.

At the city of Washington—the votes of the Electors of President and Vice President were counted on the 13th inst. in the Senate, the House of Representatives attending, and were declared as follows:

President—THOMAS JEFFERSON,		162
	C. C. PINCKNEY,	14
Vice-President—GEORGE CLINTON,		162
	RUFUS KING,	14

Mint.—The amount of the Coinage, at the mint of the United States, in 1804, was as follows: GOLD, 6795 Eagles—30475 Half Eagles—3327 Quarter Eagles—total amount of Gold Coins, 258,642 Dollars, 50 cents. SILVER, 19,570 Dollars, 156,519 Half Dollars, 6788 Quarter Dollars, and 8265 Dimes—total amount of Silver Coins, 100,340 Dollars, 50 cents. Copper Coin, amounting to 12,844 Dollars, 94 cents. Amount of all the Coins, 371,827 Dollars, 94 cents.

In the region of the sea coast, from Maine to Virginia, the season appears to have been not only much more severe than winters past, but proportionably colder and more abounding in snow than in the interior parts of the country. The interior, truly, is covered with a good depth of snow (in this vicinity judged to be 3 feet) and the weather has been severer than common. But on and towards the sea coast, southward and eastward, the snow appears in many places deeper than it is here, and uniformly of greater depth than it has been known to be there for many years; the cold is proportionable. Stages have been impeded in every direction; the navigable streams and harbors frozen; and commerce on the coast at a stand.

A remark has been often made, that the climates in the United States become more temperate as we recede from the sea shore, westward. The difference of temperature in the same parallels of latitude has been reckoned equal to 10 degrees in winter, between the sea and the Ohio and Mississippi. The justness of this remark appears to be confirmed the present season. While the people near the sea-shore are suffering extremely from frost and snow, while they compare the present winter to that of 1780, we hear little complaint from the western country. While in New-Jersey the snow is stated from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 feet in depth, we have accounts of heavy rains and destructive freshets about the head of the Ohio, and a ship of 300 tons was launched at Pittsburgh, on the 12th of January.

[*Walpole Observatory.*]

LITERARY.

Among the many Dictionaries of the Engligh Language which have been offered to the public choice, JOHNSON'S is still resorted to as the standard. His clear and copious explanations, supported by the authorities of the best writers, have contributed, perhaps more than the labours of any other Lexicographer, to give precision to our language: and his orthography has been considered as a pattern by succeeding compilers—Of late, the importance of a consistent and regular pronunciation has more particularly engaged the attention of Philologers: nor have their exertions been viewed by the public with indifference. Propriety of speech has become a matter of taste, and vulgarisms are gradually wearing away. In producing this effect, Walker's Critical Pronouncing Dictionary has had considerable influence; and to his Principles the public suffrage seems to have given the decided preference. But an exclusive attention to orthoëpy is, perhaps, as improper as would be a total neglect of it. It is, therefore, with peculiar satisfaction we see a combination of the advantages above alluded to in an Edition of Johnson's Dictionary, in which is introduced Walker's Standard of Pronunciation, published by Jacob Johnson of this city. To give some idea of the manner in which the work has been executed, we select the following from the Publisher's Advertisement.

"In noting the Pronunciation, Walker's Critical Pronouncing Dictionary has been the general guide; but where words occurred not to be found in that (of which the instances were numerous) other sources have been investigated, particularly Marchbank's Quarto Edition of 1798, and the pronunciation of those words carefully regulated by Walker's directions.

"In point of correctness, the Editor considers himself justified, from the unremitting attention bestowed upon the work, to claim for it a preeminence over every Edition which has come within his notice. In the course of the work, different Editions of Johnson's Dictionary were often consulted; and, that the derivations might be as correct as possible, frequent recurrence was had to the most approved Dictionaries of the foreign languages, in which the original words are found, especially the Greek, Latin, French and German."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

To G. H. we present our acknowledgments for his well-meant communication—he must however excuse us for declining to introduce it to our readers. When it shall be put in our power to call forth the generous feelings of the heart, and excite the tear of compassion at the recital of the sufferings of humanity, we will eagerly avail ourselves of the opportunity, such relations give scope to the warm wishes of Benevolence. But surely we have no right to shock the tender-hearted by telling tales of horror: nor to degrade human nature by spreading abroad even a *true account* of the atrocious guilt of *Nicolas Bronzi*, and *Claire Marenoi*.

NOVICEA improves, but has not yet quite arrived at the standard of insertion. If he would pay a little more attention to his style, avoiding tautologies and needless repetitions, he might become a useful writer. We suggest the propriety of his submitting his pieces to the pruning hand of some friend on whose judgment he could rely, previous to sending them to the Fire-side.

AVA, &c. &c. are under consideration.

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